LC 3733
.N59 R8

No. 1

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF OFFICERS

OF THE

RUSSIAN COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE OF NEW YORK

FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1919-1920

COUNCIL OF THE RUSSIAN COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

Gentlemen:

I have the honor to submit to you for approval the Report of your Board of Officers for the Academic Year 1919–1920, including introductory remarks on the education of Russian workmen in the United States, by the President of the Institute, a survey of work accomplished, by the Vice-president, the Treasurer's report and the report of the Auditing Committee.

Respectfully yours,

ALEXANDER PETRUNKEVITCH
President

TMP92-008116

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EDUCATION OF RUSSIAN WORKMEN IN THE UNITED STATES

No problem of education in the United States in recent years has equalled in importance that of imparting knowledge to the adult Russian workmen and schooling their minds. Refugees of the Old World and of a time-honored system of exploitation, frequently illiterate in their own language, constantly on their guard against things unaccustomed lest some harm befall them, well aware of their own lack of training, class-conscious, suspicious of the motives of men with better education, greater financial resources or authority, confused in their minds by events in Russia—the Russian workmen can be handled neither as normal adults, nor as other foreigners. A few among them manage, indeed, to acquire some knowledge of English in the public evening schools, but the majority become quickly discouraged and drop out or continue to study in their own poorly equipped schools supported by some local Russian organizations. Any attempt to induce them to study at an American school meets with the suspicion that behind the outward desire to give them education may lurk the disguised intention to "Americanize." The workmen are willing enough and even anxious to study, provided the knowledge is imparted to them in a manner allowing easy assimilation, but even those among them who will eventually seek admission to citizenship resent the conjunction of education with Americanization.

Moreover, the Russian workmen need not only a knowledge of English which shall benefit them in their particular trade or work; they need knowledge of all subjects regularly studied in schools, especially mathematics, and that knowledge must be imparted to them simultaneously with the English language if it is to be of use to them while they remain in this country. Prolonged postponement of the acquisition of such knowledge is apt to produce an unfavorable reaction, to discourage them, to make them acquiesce in their status quo. But how can the knowledge be imparted in a language which in itself forms a subject of hard study?

The problem is not an easy one and it is evident that only Russians or men well acquainted with the Russian language will be able to solve it. Even so, the difficulty is not at once removed, for the present psychology of the Russian workman puts an almost insurmountable barrier between him and those whom he mistrusts politically, even though such persons be gifted and experienced teachers. The first and most necessary step on the part of the teacher is, therefore, to instill into the minds of his pupils confidence in himself, to create an atmosphere of mutual respect, based, not on the amount of knowledge which each possesses, but on purely human attributes and earnestness of purpose. And this confidence can be created not by a confession of a political credo before a sensitive and exacting audience, but by a most scrupulous avoidance of the slightest expression capable of misinterpretation, and by an absolutely impartial yet interesting and live presentation of the subject of study.

But knowledge alone, whether elementary or of the most advanced kind, does not in itself necessarily develop the social and ethical instincts. Highly efficient egotism and fiendishness have caused the convulsions of the World, and workmen who have been economic slaves for generations, through the possession of knowledge may become the agents who will destroy civilization. They must be taught to apply their knowledge for the benefit of humanity, in the service of the common good which is the only measure of true citizenship. Here again the difficulties are almost insurmountable. The cannons were still thundering to make the world safe for democracy, when democracy itself was declared to be an illusion of reactionaries. The idea of right became totally confused in the minds of the Russian workmen, and to them still denotes only what is of benefit to their class alone. The Law lost prestige in their eyes, and what was left was rudely shattered by the un-American and un-democratic police raids and arrests. Under such circumstances, to attempt to teach citizenship through an acquainting with the country's institutions and cultivating a respect for law, would be nothing short of ridiculous.

Here again mutual respect alone offers a firm basis for constructive work. In measure as they learn to respect their teachers, the workmen learn to respect the institutions which support the teachers' work. The personal element entering as a wedge between the better attributes of their character and the extraneous super-

position of hatred resulting from sad experience, opens the way to healthy influences. Slowly hatred gives way to doubt, doubt to the assurance that there is good in the new relationship, creating in them a feeling of responsibility. Those who have attended the lectures regularly, have come to look upon the Institute as something contributing a necessary element to their existence, something that would leave a void in their life if the work of the Institute were suddenly discontinued.

The object of the Russian Collegiate Institute of New York is, therefore, not simply to give useful knowledge, but by giving it impartially and free from all political or religious bias, through personal contact with the workmen, to fill the wide gap made by the Revolution between them and the educated classes and thus help the Russian workmen to become useful members of the community of whichever country they may freely choose as their own. To accomplish this, the plan of the work must necessarily be adapted to its particular purposes. Accordingly, the Institute does not attempt either to imitate or compete with American educational institutions. The night school capable of seating about 110 students accustoms them to the Institute. They study English *as an obligatory subject*, but all other subjects are taught in Russian. They come in personal contact with their teachers; they receive courteous attention; they find willing counselors; they learn, by example rather than through peremptory exaction, the rules that govern all human associations.

The work of the Technical Department is naturally limited by a lack of equipment and of sufficient funds. But the account given in the Vice-president's report shows quite encouraging results, and gives an intimation of what could be achieved in this line if the resources were greater.

By far the most important phase of the work consists in lecture courses, given under the auspices of the Academic Department. These courses are given Saturdays and Sundays, afternoons and evenings, and cover a number of subjects. They are given in various cities in which there are Russian workmen in sufficient number to warrant the sending of lecturers, and they enjoy great popularity as is shown by the number of workmen attending them and by the constantly increasing demand from various organizations for lecturers. Besides furnishing the workmen with information of the broadest educational value, these lectures have rapidly accomplished

another, a most commendable result: the pre-occupation of the men with politics has diminished in proportion to the increase in their interest in the acquisition of knowledge. The halls are often so crowded that there is not even standing room. Indeed, the number of lectures given by lecturers of the Institute is limited only by lack of sufficient funds and could easily be quadrupled under favorable circumstances.

In reviewing the work accomplished during the first academic year we well may admit that not everything went smoothly, that the choice of courses might have been made more in harmony with the aims of the Institute, and that much has been left undone because of the novelty of the enterprise. At the same time the members of the Institute may feel proud of its actual achievement, for nothing comparable to this work has ever before been attempted in the United States.

The problem of educating Russian workmen in the United States is both a Russian and an American problem. Russia needs skilled men, needs future builders of the new commonwealth. America does not want discouraged and dissatisfied workmen, does not want men unacquainted with the advantages of freedom in a civilized country and with the responsibilities of free citizens. No coercive measures, no restrictions, no isolating, no punishment, no propaganda can make of foreign workmen useful members of the community. This can be accomplished only by education, by example, by patience, by mutual respect and by confidence in the democratic principle of public service.

The work of the Institute was made possible through the generosity of several donors, a list of whom appears in the financial report, and the chief of these is the Carnegie Corporation. To say that we feel grateful to the donors, does not adequately express our sense of deep obligation to them. The change in the mental attitude of the 50,000 workmen whom we have reached is the best testimonial to the fact that the gifts were well worth while.

ALEXANDER PETRUNKEVITCH,
President

A SURVEY OF THE WORK ACCOMPLISHED BY THE RUSSIAN COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR 1919–1920

For a long time the minds of persons devoted to the welfare of the Russian immigrants in the United States, have been seriously occupied with the idea of organizing a Russian educational institution which would, as a main nursery of enlightenment, serve the intellectual and cultural needs not only of those residing in some large industrial centre, such as for instance New York, where it might be located, but also of the greatest possible number of the Russians scattered over the country.

There has long been felt the urgent need of an institution which would come to the assistance of the helpless mass of the Russian immigrants by lifting their cultural and educational level in general and by ameliorating their material condition through disseminating among them purely practical information, such as technical knowledge of various kinds, an acquaintance with the language, the history, and the institutions of the country which they find themselves residents of and are perfect strangers to, without the language and pitifully uninformed.

Yet the idea never approached anything like its full realization owing to the absence of an adequate contingent of persons possessing sufficient preparation, experience and knowledge in matters pedagogico-educational and social; to the lack of organization among the Russians in the United States; and, finally, to there being no funds. So for years and years it remained in the realmof "good intentions."

It was only after the Federation of the Russian Organizations in America had come into existence that these good intentions began to move towards actuality. The thing that contributed most to such progress, was the fact that, as a result of the events in Russia in recent years, there appeared here in America Russians of great experience in the fields of social and educational work.

Following the second convention of this Federation a small Russian school was opened in New York on the 15th of March, 1919. From the very outset of this school's activity it was clear how diffi-

cult it would be to satisfy the most elementary cultural needs even of those residing in New York. Still the problem of extending the work had to be faced. As increasing the teaching facilities and attracting a larger staff of competent instructors were the most important sides of this problem, great additional expenses were necessarily implied, and thus the solution of the whole problem depended on the possibility of obtaining the funds. Consequently all the efforts of those at the head of the school and of the Federation were now exerted in this direction; and thanks to the endeavors of Professor A. Petrunkevitch and of Mr. J. Landfield, success was at last met with: the necessary financial aid was secured from the Carnegie Corporation and from other courses, and the establishment of the Russian Collegiate Institute now became an assured fact.

Such being the case, the necessary staff of specialists was immediately gotten together to take part in the administration and instruction in the new Russian institution. The work of the earlier school, pending its transformation, proceeded on a larger and upon an improved plan.

In the meantime preparations for the new institution continued up to the memorable date of June 24, 1919, when at a special meeting, called for the purpose, a resolution was passed in accordance with which the present Russian Collegiate Institute was officially established, and in the following September the classes and lectures of the first academic year began.

As the basis of its work, the Russian Collegiate Institute adopted a broad program, democratic in spirit and purpose, the aim of which was to make the Russian Collegiate Institute a live factor, responsive, to the uttermost, to the cultural and educational needs of the Russian workingman in this country.

In order to convey a more or less adequate idea of the amount of instruction given during the first year, and the results thereof, in as far, at least, as such results are capable of expression in academic terms; the following statement contains in brief the general plan and program by which the instruction has been conducted; and points out as well the departures and omissions necessitated by the actual conditions of the work.

All the instruction has been distributed among three departments:

1. Preparatory (Russian school)
2. Special (Technical and Agricultural) *and*
3. Academic (Lectures on subjects of general education)

1. The instruction given in the Preparatory Department, has been grouped in four grades according to a previous training or a lack thereof demonstrated by the applicants at the time of enrollment. The subjects taught and the manner of their distribution throughout these grades, may be seen from the following table:

a. *First Group:* for the illiterate or nearly so;

Russian: the elements of the language.

Mathematics: the elements of arithmetic.

b. *Second Group:* for persons who could read and write, and had certain unsystematic knowledge in the elements of arithmetic;

Russian: introduction to grammar (elementary syntax and morphology).

Mathematics: systematic drill in the fundamental arithmetical operations as far as fractions.

c. *Third Group:* for persons who were able to read and write with ease, but were deficient in grammar; in arithmetic—thoroughly acquainted with the four fundamental operations;

Russian: systematic review of the grammar and instruction in Russian composition.

Mathematics: fractions and decimals; mensuration; percentage and interest.

d. *Fourth Group:* for those having had previous training elsewhere sufficient to enable them to proceed with the following:

Russian: advanced composition, rhetoric and introduction to the general history of Literature.

Mathematics: algebra and geometry.

N. B. English was obligatory in all the above grades; and the students, for this subject, were divided into two special grades: 1 for beginners, and 2 for those able to understand, speak and write simple English.

The work in this department continued throughout the entire academic year, and the only change in the grouping was the combining of the first group with the second, owing to a certain irregularity of attendance on the part of the students enrolled in the first group. The total number of students attending these classes, towards the end of the first semester, was 110. These figures together with the progress of the students should be most gratifying; more especially, as this department may be considered basal, since the development of the other departments, depends, in part, on the success of the Preparatory, whose chief aims are to equip the students with

elementary knowledge and afford them mental discipline sufficient to enable them to pursue the study of more advanced or of special subjects or of both.

2. The organization of the work of the Special Department (Technical and Agricultural) proved more complex and, consequently, met with greater difficulties than had been anticipated.

According to the program worked out by Prof. D. Vinogradoff to whom a full acknowledgement is due for his earnest effort to put the Technical Division of this Department on a working basis, courses were to have been given on the following subjects:

a. Thermo-technics
b. Electro-technics
c. Hydro-technics
d. The Automobile *and*
e. Mechanical Drawing and Free-hand Drawing.

That the program was not carried out in its entirety, was mostly on account of financial difficulties. Even in the case of the Automobile courses, though the Y. M. C. A. had put their automobile school at our disposal, experience proved that lacking our own machines and shop, it was futile to expect any success in an enterprise of this nature.

Nevertheless that part of the program which it was possible to carry out with the Institute's own means, was realized; and in this way the courses in Mechanical and in Free-hand Drawing were offered, and have been successfully conducted throughout the year.

The courses in the Agricultural Division of this Department were given, by means of weekly lectures, on the following subjects:

a. Economic Basis of Modern Farming . . . . . Prof. N. Borodin
b. Russian Farming vs. American Farming . . . . Prof. N. Borodin
c. Artificial Breeding of Fish . . . . . Prof. N. Borodin
d. Natural, Historical and Technical Bases of Farming . . Mr. I. Rosen
e. Tractors on the Farm . . . . . Mr. V. Kanonoff
f. Refrigerating Cars . . . . . Mr. M. Grotten
g. Inspection of Refrigerators . . . Messrs. M. Grotten and Podziersky
h. Horticulture (Fruit growing) . . . . Lectures by Mr. D. Pourmell
i. Vegetable Gardening . . . . . Lectures by Mr. D. Pourmell
j. Inspection of an Agricultural School . Lectures by Mr. D. Pourmell
k. Farming Machinery . . . . . Mr. E. Pabo

3. The work of the Academic Department consisted of lectures and demonstrations both intra muros and extra muros; in the latter case the instruction was given for the benefit of various Russian organizations in New York as well as in other places. Below is the list of the subjects lectured upon in this Department; the instruction, other than lecturing, is also herein indicated:

a. Natural Sciences in their Application to Life . . . Prof. N. Borodin
b. Culture and Technics . . . . . Prof. D. Vinogradoff
c. On Technical Instruction for the People's University . . . . . Prof. D. Vinogradoff
d. Lectures on Electricity . . . . . Prof. D. Vinogradoff
e. Lectures on the History of Civilization . . . . . Prof. I. Galatsky
f. Visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art . . . . Prof. I. Galatsky
g. Physical Geography and Astronomy (Lectures) . . Mr. A. Dittmar
h. Visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art . . . . Mr. A. Dittmar
i. Lecture on Physics . . . . . Mr. V. Kanonoff
j. Literature and the People . . . . . Mr. D. Krinkin
k. Lectures on the History of Co-operatives in Europe . . . . . Mr. K. Oberoutcheff
l. Lectures on Biology . . . . . Prof. A. Petrunkevitch
m. Visit to the Museum of Natural History . . Prof. A. Petrunkevitch
n. Lectures on the History of Russian Music . . . . . Mr. A. Swan
o. Lectures on the History of Aviation . . . . . Mr. I. Sikorsky
p. Lectures on Electricity . . . . . Mr. I. Sikorsky
q. Lectures on Modern Russian Literature . . . . . Mr. E. Tartak
r. Submarine Navigation . . . . . Mr. L. Trofimov
s. Lectures on Physics and Mechanics . . . . . .Mr. V. Tchikoff
t. "Is Money Wealth" (one lecture) . . . . . Mr. I. Schwitau
u. Lectures on Russian History . . . . . Mr. V. Yakhontoff

It must be noted that the demand for lectures of this kind grew all the time, and, along with this, the radius of the Russian Collegiate Institute's work and influence increased in proportion to the number of new communitites visited by its lecturers.

The total number of these lectures reached 278, out of which 121 were delivered at the Russian Collegiate Institute and the rest 157 lectures—outside.

The following list gives the names of the various Russian organizations before which the lectures were delivered:

a. Prosviestcheniie,—in New York.
b. Nauka,—in New York.
c. The People's Home,—in Brownsville, N. Y.

d. The Russian Christians' Home,—in Brownsville, N. Y.
e. The Independent Church,—in Baltimore, Md.
f. The Alliance of the Russian Citizens,—in Waterbury, Conn.
g. The Peasants' Alliance,—in Waterbury, Conn.
h. The Union of the Russian Workingmen and Peasants,—in Hartford, Conn.
i. The Union of the Russian Workingmen and Peasants,—in New Britain, Conn.
j. The Bayonne Branch of the Peasants' Alliance,—in Bayonne, N. J.
k. The Peasants' Union,—in Detroit, Mich.
l. The Union of the Russian Workingmen,—in New Haven, Conn.
m. The Russian Progressive Organization,—in New Haven, Conn.
n. The Methodist Church,—in Jersey City, N. J.
o. The Russian Society for Self-Education,—in Meriden, Conn.
p. "The School for Education Society,"—in Newark, N. J.
q. The Third Branch of the Society Nauka,—in Yonkers, N. Y.
r. The Union of the Russian Workingmen,—in Hastings on Hudson
s. The Society "Nauka,"—in Portchester, N. Y.
t. The Union of the Russian Citizens,—in Philadelphia, Penn.

In connection with the same Department there were arranged five special educational tours, as follows:

One—to the Museum of Natural History

Two—to the Metropolitan Museum of Art

One—visit of inspection to Refrigerators *and*

One—to an Agricultural School

In addition to this during the academic year Moving Pictures on educational subjects were shown, and three Literary and Musical Evenings were given.

All this work the Russian Collegiate Institute accomplished notwithstanding very unfavorable conditions resulting from the present social and industrial unrest and the Russian workingman's consequent fear of police raids keeping him away from any gathering; notwithstanding the Russian organizations' lack of suitable lecture halls; and despite the necessity of first overcoming the inertia of the Russian masses and their lack of confidence in the educated and socially privileged.

Nevertheless the number of those who attended the lectures comes up to quite a creditable figure—50,000.

One more thing remains to mention before closing this survey. To supplement its work the Russian Collegiate Institute opened a school in Brownsville for Russian children who formed two grades, junior and senior, taught by Mrs. Shevchenko and Mr. Raab, respectively. The aim of this school was to maintain and develop in the many Russian children of that district a knowledge of Russian and Russia, and together with this through the children to create more intimate relations between the parents and the Institute. At first there were in this school 75 children, but later on, owing to the unsuitableness of the building for the school, half of them left for the Russian Church school.

Such are, in outline, the results of the activities of our Institute in the past year. It was to be expected, of course, that this year would be one of attempts, mistakes, experiments and acquiring of experience. So the reports of the instructors show that past mistakes and lessons have been profited by and that a great deal of very important experience has been gained. There is no doubt but that making use of this experience will be one of the tasks of the Institute in the coming academic year.

In conclusion it would not be amiss to call attention to the growing demand, coming from the country towns, for Russian teachers both for elementary instruction and for instruction in various technical and scientific subjects. The extreme lack of such teachers in America is so well known that it is useless to speak of it. It is to be hoped, then, that the Russian Collegiate Institute, in the coming year, further developing its plans and activities, will give attention also to this urgently important problem.

I. Galatzky

Vice-President

TREASURER'S REPORT

To the great regret of the Council Mr. J. Landfield was obliged to resign as treasurer of the Institute because of his departure for California, and the duties of Treasurer were temporarily assigned by the Council to its President. The following financial statements were prepared by Mr. Havemann, member of the Council, with the aid of the Vice-President and Secretary on the basis of records kept in the Institute. Owing to the merging of the Russian School into the Institute it was deemed advisable to keep the statements separate. It may be pointed out that only the Vice-President, the Secretary and the administrative assistant received monthly salaries because they were required to give their full time to the Institute, whereas all teachers, instructors and lecturers were paid pro rata for lessons or lectures given.

ALEXANDER PETRUNKEVITCH

RUSSIAN SCHOOL

of the Central Executive Committee of the Federation of Russian Organizations in the United States.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

May 1, 1919 to September 20, 1919

RECEIPTS

Balance of the fund of the Russian Federation	$1050.00	
Donated by Mr. A. V. Behr	1000.00	
" " Mr. L. M. Wurgaft	200.00	
" " "Youraveta"	1000.00	
" " "American Committee of all Russian Zemstwo and City Association	1000.00	
" " Mr. Galatzky	17.75	
Received from Treasurer (by Cheque No. 1)	1000.00	$5267.75

DISBURSEMENTS

Rent	$1600.00	
Improvements and alterations	950.00	
Salaries	1379.00	
Furniture	391.75	
Books and School Supplies	110.60	
Office Expenses and Housekeeping	547.48	
Moving Picture Lantern	148.92	$5127.75
Balance		$ 140.00

RUSSIAN COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

September 20, 1919 to May 1, 1920

RECEIPTS

Donated by Central War Industrial Committee		$ 2000.00	
Balance of the fund of the Russian School		140.00	
Grant of Carnegie Corporation		10000.00	
Donated by "All Russian Central Committee of Co-operative Societies		200.00	
"Archangel Com. of Coop. Soc."		200.00	
"Zakoopsbyt"		200.00	
"Sincredsouz"		200.00	
Central War Industrial Committee		5000.00	
Committee for the Regeneration of Russia		1558.34	
Contributed by individuals:		555.00	
Mr. J. Landfield	$310.00		
Mr. Oganesser	100.00		
Mr. Varfolomeev	50.00		
Mr. Petrunkevitch	40.00		
Mr. Groten	30.00		
Mr. Podziersky	10.00		
Mr. Galatsky	15.00		
Students' fees		1121.80	
Sale of books, interest, refunds		99.98	$ 2175.12

DISBURSEMENTS

Rent and Heating		$ 1675.00	
Salaries (in New York)		8133.50	
Salaries (in Brooklyn)		1330.00	
Lecture fees		2075.00	
Books and School Supplies		1009.70	
Furniture		492.30	
Housekeeping		1256.99	
Treasurer's Cheque No. 1, paid to Russ. School		1000.00	
Office Expenses		297.04	
Sundries		420.13	$17689.66
	Balance		$ 3585.46

N.B. This Balance does not include deposit held by the

Proprietor of the house,	$ 600.00	
Deposit held by Edison Co.	25.00	
Deposit held by N. Y. Gas Co.	5.00	
Total	$630.00	

RUSSIAN COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

219 SECOND AVENUE

NEW YORK

Report of the Auditing Committee.

The auditing Committee comprising the undersigned members, has examined the books and the annual financial report of the Russian Collegiate Institute for the year 1919–1920 and has found that

1. The annual financial report is correct,
2. The figures shown in this report correspond to those in the books,
3. The books presented for examination, namely (*a*) Chequebook, (*b*) General Ledger, (*c*) Weekly Expense Account and (*d*) Secretary's Account are adequate for checking up expenditures,
4. The vouchers correspond to the entries of expenditures.

Signed: D. Vinogradov
L. Trofimov
V. Yakhontov

May 4, 1920

8D 25.4

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